

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 /052 W
-----006198 072313Z /70

O 072237Z SEP 78 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9535

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MORG, PINT, PORS, HA
SUBJECT: HAITIAN MILITARY PROMOTIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS

1. FOR THE SECOND TIME THIS YEAR, PRESIDENT DUVALIER HAS AUTHORIZED EXTENSIVE PROMOTIONS AND RE-ASSIGNMENTS WITHIN THE FORCES ARMEES D'HAITI (FADH). RECENT SHIFTS APPEAR DESIGNED TO UPGRADE THE FADH'S ABILITY TO CARRY OUT ITS MILITARY AND LAW-ENFORCEMENT FUNCTIONS. WE BELIEVE THEY ARE MOTIVATED AT LEAST IN PART BY THE PRESIDENT'S DISSATISFACTION, BASED ON RECENT SURPRISE INSPECTIONS OF CIVIL AND MILITARY INSTALLATIONS, WITH THE CURRENT STATE OF OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, EQUIPMENT, MORALE AND LEADERSHIP OF THE HAITIAN MILITARY. HIGHLIGHTS FOLLOW.

2. THE CHIEF OF STAFF, LTG JEAN-BAPTISTE HILAIRE, HAS BEEN RETIRED, REPORTEDLY BECAUSE OF HIS INDECISIVENESS, INEFFECTIVENESS AND POSSIBLE MISUSE OF FUNDS. HIS REPLACEMENT IS ROGER ST.-ALBIN, CONCURRENTLY PROMOTED TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL. ST.-ALBIN IS SAID TO SHOW GREATER INTEREST IN THE CONDITION OF HIS TROOPS AND EQUIPMENT THAN HILAIRE, BUT IN VIEW OF HIS AGE (HE IS 62) IT IS DIFFICULT TO SAY WHETHER HE WILL PROVE MORE EFFECTIVE THAN HIS PREDECESSOR. IN ANY CASE, THE MOST INFLUENTIAL VOICE AT GENERAL HEADQUARTERS IS LIKELY TO BE COL (AD HONORES) FRANCIS CHARLES, THE NEWLY APPOINTED EXECUTIVE OFFICER, WHO REPLACES COL JEAN THOMAS. CHARLES IS A STRONG, INTELLIGENT AND HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL

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INFLUENTIAL OFFICER WHOSE YOUNGER BROTHER SERGE IS HAITI'S AMBASSADOR TO THE UN. COL CHARLES CAN BE EXPECTED TO USE HIS POSITION TO INCREASE HIS DIRECT ACCESS TO PRESIDENT JEAN CLAUDE DUVALIER. HIS NEW APPOINTMENT INCREASES THE ALREADY CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE OF THE CHARLES BROTHERS.

3. POLICE FUNCTIONS. COL DESLANDES DUPERVAL, THE PORT AU PRINCE

POLICE CHIEF, HAS BEEN RETIRED BECAUSE OF HIS INABILITY TO CONTROL THE GROWING CRIME PROBLEM IN THE CAPITAL. HIS REPLACEMENT, COL (AH) JEAN VALME, IS THE FORMER HEAD OF THE SERVICE D'INVESTIGATION AT THE CASERNES DESSALINES. VALME HAD ALREADY IN PRACTICE BEEN PERFORMING MAY OF THE ANTI-CRIME FUNCTIONS THAT IN THEORY WERE COL DUPERVAL'S RESPONSIBILITY. VLAME'S NEW DEPUTY IS LTC MAXIME ANTOINE, WHO MOVES UP FROM HIS POSITION AS CHIEF OF CRIMINAL RESEARCH FOR THE PORT AU PRINCE POLICE. BOTH ARE VERY TOUGH, ABLE OFFICERS WHO SHOULD STRENGTHEN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.

4. LTC JEAN-CLAUDE GUILLAUME, THE NOTORIOUSLY TOUGH AND DISCIPLINARIAN PETIONVILLE CHIEF OF POLICE, HAS BEE ASSIGNED TO COMMAND THE ARMY'S ENLISTED TRAINING CAMP. WE UNDERSTAND THIS MOVE IS NOT INTENDED AS A DEMOTION. REPORTEDLY PRESIDENT DUVALIER WAS SHOCKED BY CONDITIONS AT THE TRAINING CAMP AND PICKED GUILLAUME, WHOM HE REPECTS, AS THE BEST MAN TO PUT THINGS IN ORDER. GUILLAUME'S REPLACEMENT, LTC CLAREL CLERMONT, IS LIKELY TO BE LESS TOUGH AND ARBITRARY THAN GUILLAUME IN HIS NEW JOB. CLERMONT HAS JUST RETURNED FROM C&GS COLLEGE IN THE U.S.

5. TWO OFFICERS, MAJ JOSEPH MAURICE HILAIRE AND L/CDR FRITZ TIPPENHAUER, WERE SUSPENDED FROM DUTY WITHOUT PAY. HILAIRE IS THE YOUNGER BROTHER OF OUTGOING CHIEF OF STAFF LTG JEAN-BAPTISTE HILAIRE. MAJ HILAIRE WAS ASSIGNED FOUR YEARS AGO AS MILITARY

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ATTACHE IN MEXICO CITY. WE UNDERSTAND THAT OF THAT TIME, HE SPENT ALL BUT ONE MONTH IN PORT AU PRINCE LOOKING AFTER HIS PERSONAL BUSINESS. ALTHOUGH HE WAS A PERSONAL FRIEND OF PRESIDENT DUVALIER, THE PRESIDENT FINALLY BECAME FED UP WITH HIS FLAGRANT NEGLECT OF HIS DUTIES AND ADKED THAT HE BE SUSPENDED.

6. EMBASSY COMMENT. THIS LAST ROUND OF PROMOTIONS AND REASSIGNMENTS REFLECTS A CONTINUING EFFORT ON THE PART OF PRESIDENT DUVALIER TO UPGRADE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE HAITIAN ARMED FORCES, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME BEING CAREFUL NOT TO CREATE THERE A POLITICAL COUNTERWEIGHT TO HIS OWN POWER. RATHER THAN NAMING A STRONG CHIEF OF STAFF, HE HAS CHOSEN AN ELDERLY OFFICER WHO POSES NO THREAT, BUT GIVEN HIM A DYNAMIC EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO PUSH THROUGH SOME NEEDED REFORMS. THE SUSPENSION OF MAJ HILAIRE IS SIGNIFICANT IN THAT IT DEMONSTRATES DUVALIER'S COMMITMENT TO CLEAN HOUSE EVEN WHEN A PERSONAL FRIEND IS INVOLVED. ONE OF DUVALIER'S PRIMARY MOTIVES FOR REFORM IN THE MILITARY IS SAID TO BE THE FEAR THAT IF THE PRESENT CONDITIONS AND LOW MORALE CONTINUE, THE TROOPS - AND PERHAPS SOME OFFICERS - WILL BECOME ALIENATED FROM HIS REGIME. A POSSIBLE EFFECT OF THESE CHANGES, WHETHER

INTENDED OR NOT, MAY ALSO BE TO RESTORE TO THE MILITARY AND
POLICE AUTHORITIES SOME OF THE POWER AND AUTHORITY THEY LOST
TO THE MILITIA DURING HIS FATHER'S RULE.
JONES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PERSONNEL, PERSONNEL MOVEMENTS, PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS, REORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 sep 1978
Decapton Date: 01 jan 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PORTA03734
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780365-0286
Format: TEL
From: PORT AU PRINCE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780993/aaaaczaj.tel
Line Count: 120
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: cbfc6856-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1518901
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HAITIAN MILITARY PROMOTIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS
TAGS: MORG, PINT, PORS, HA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/cbfc6856-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014